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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the development of interest in ethnicity on the part of scholars is briefly highlighted, and the beginnings of this increased interest are traced to Robert Park when, in 1923, he urged sociologists to concentrate study on urban ethnic groups as a means of understanding community processes. As a means of understanding the contemporary study of ethnicity among scholars, nine popular sociological and communication journals were searched for articles dealing with ethnic and minority matters for the past six years. Data are presented as generated from a study of the role of interpersonal communication in the socialization of the child into the ethnic group of the parent. The importance of dealing with conceptual problems in the study of ethnic and minority groups is examined through the use of the above methods. It is suggested that problems typically encountered in the selection of subjects and the operationalization of ethnic group identification can be avoided through adequate conceptualization of the basic phenomena under study. The study also attempts to illustrate the contemporary social map. (Author/RB)

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SOME CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY OF ETHNIC AND MINORITY GROUPS IN COMMUNICATION

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Ethnicity in American Life

It is difficult to comprehend the full meaning of ethnicity in America. Oscar Handlin, writing some introductory remarks to the revised edition of his wonderful work, The Uprooted, put it most eloquently:

> Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history.
>
> For almost fifteen years now, I have searched among the surviving records of the masses of men who peopled our country. As I worked, the conviction grew upon me that adequately to describe the course and effects of immigration involved no less a task than to set down the whole history of the United States. That is not a burden I can now assume.[1]

This observation is remarkable not so much because it is a statement of what should be obvious as a fact in American history, but rather because so few Americans, both in lay and intellectual circles, have grasped this fact until fairly recently.

In the academic life, Robert E. Park was considerably ahead of his time when, during the very beginnings of American sociology, he turned to the study of Jewish, Black and Japanese urban communities as a source of knowledge in the quest for the Great Community:

> In some sense these communities in which our immigrants live their smaller lives may be regarded as models for our community organizations, such things as will get attention and interest for the little world of the locality. We are encouraging a new parochialism, seeking to initiate a movement that will run counter to the current romanticism with its eye always on the horizon, one which will recognize limits and work within them.[2]

These ethnic communities deserved further study, he indicated, and should be viewed as the model for neighborhood building. Their mutual aid societies, newspapers, recreational centers, and churches made a thriving local life possible; this envelopment in the local order should be imitated and recreated in other urban areas of non-ethnic life. Since 1923, when Park sounded this call, little attention has been paid until fairly recently to the ethnic group as community since the assumption is often made that assimilation of most of the groups has become complete or nearly so.

In 1971, Andrew Greeley noted that "most Americans feel ambivalent about the fact of diversity and also about their own particular location in ethnic geography."[3] It is this ambivalence about American cultural pluralism, he indicates, which has resulted in relatively little in the way of serious research on intra-ethnic group relations in the last quarter of a century. A consultation of the indices of the various sociological and psychological journals for the last three decades will yield practically nothing on the topic of white American ethnic groups. He notes that "the presumption seemed to have been that there was nothing there to study, or that even if there was something to study, it was somehow immoral to be concerned with it."[4]

There are signs that this attitude toward Cultural Pluralism on the part of academicians is changing. If this is so, increased attention to this area will in some measure have stemmed from public interest in ethnic groups. Public interest can be traced, in some measure, to the assertions of Black Americans in recent years (Greeley, 1971; Novak, 1973; and Krug, 1972).[5] Blacks have legitimated the idea of cultural pluralism; they have made it official. It is now accepted on a fairly wide scale for Blacks to have their own tradition, heritage, and culture. It follows that if it is all right for Blacks, it must also be legitimate for everyone else to rediscover their heritage. The Ford Foundation,

very much sensitive to new, popular trends, has made substantial grants for the study of ethnic problems to the National Opinion Research Center, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the American Jewish Committee, and several other institutions. The foundation is also sponsoring the studies of doctoral students desiring to study aspects of ethnicity. Bills have been introduced in Congress providing for the establishment of a number of ethnic heritage study centers. Legislation to that effect was introduced in the Senate by Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania. A similar bill was introduced in the House by Roman Pucinski of Illinois. When passed, the bills provide for regional ethnic study centers to "foster the study of the history, traditions, and cultures of the various ethnic groups within that region."[6] Research being conducted by Theodore Hershberg designed to determine the relationship between ethnicity and socioeconomic change is being supported by a $280,000 grant for the years 1969-1974 by the Center for Study of Metropolitan Problems, NIMH.[7] All of this points toward a resurgence of interest in America in the positive contributions of the ethnic and minority group to the individual and the society. The attitude characterizing the "new ethnicity" is aptly stated by author Michael Novak:

> There is no such thing as homo Americanus. There is no single culture here. We do not, in fact, have a culture at all--at least, not a highly developed one, whose symbols, images, and ideas all of us work out of and constantly mine afresh; such 'common culture' as even intellectuals have is more an ideal aspired to than a task accomplished. There is the appearance of sameness, because we dress (roughly) the same, are subject to the same national media, seem to speak and look and walk the same. Standing in front of a crowded lecture hall, a speaker can scarcely single out ethnic differences. Such differences as we have, apart from race, are mainly internal. And not so much in our ideas or even in our words, but in our affections and imaginations and historical experiences: in those concrete networks in which ideas and words are given concrete reverberation, rootage, and meaning.[8]

This image of ethnicity and its accompanying experiences is a salient aspect of much of today's public life. "When I was a girl, I tried to be as American as

possible. My cousins and I would even go into another car on the subway just so we wouldn't be embarrassed by our parents speaking Armenian." Today, 58-year-old Mrs. A. Kimatian, an Armenian-American in New York, teaches in an Armenian Sunday School. She says about her students, "These kids are far more interested in their heritage than I ever was as a teenager. Everything has changed."[9] Father Papanikolaou of the Greek Orthodox Church in Champaign, Illinois, says that today the children in his parish are considerably more interested in learning about the Greek culture than about the Orthodox religion; the Church is attempting to provide for this through many of its organized school activities.[10] The Italian Cultural Society in Atlanta now sends young people to Italy to study the culture during their summer program at a university.

These examples of concern about ethnicity are interesting not so much for the organized response to "things ethnic" but rather that the stimulus for this response in large measure has come from the young; one is reminded of the age of the principal actors in the "Black pride" movement and the Mexican American movement in California. Presumably, the young Armenian wanting to learn about the history of the Armenian culture has some understanding of what it means to "be ethnic" or to belong to a minority group. The Black child, the Greek American child, the Jewish child--all must have some idea or "feel" for the meaning of the terms "ethnic group," "minority group," and "ethnicity." It is possible to speculate that the interest of younger Americans in matters ethnic stems from their own particular dilemma with respect to psychological self-identification. This may be their own particular way of dealing with the age-old question of, "Who am I?" In this sense, then, all of these children have something in common, the search for personal identity. But with respect to the factors underlying the search in which these children are involved, is there some commonality? The black child is drawn in some measure to other Blacks by his racial charac-

teristics, the Greek-American child by national ancestry, the Jewish child by some combination of religious beliefs, ancient ties to a "new" nation, and other more amorphous factors. Do these factors, race, religion, and national origin, represent some commonality which can be grouped under a single term or concept such as "ethnicity"?

Conceptualization of Minority Group, Ethnic Group and Ethnicity

Indicative of the rising interest among scholars in matters ethnic is the number of research articles found in the period from 1969 to the present in the major sociological and communication research journals. Of at least 24 articles which had mention of the term "ethnicity," "ethnic," or "minority" in their titles, one was published in 1969,[11] one in 1970,[12] seven in 1971,[13] five in 1972,[14] eight in 1973,[15] and two thus far in 1974.[16] These articles were found through a survey of the indices of the following journals for the years mentioned: American Journal of Sociology, American Sociological Review, Journal of Broadcasting, Journal of Communication, Journalism Quarterly, Public Opinion Quarterly, Social Forces, Sociology and Social Research, and Sociometry. For the most part, prior to this time period the work dealing with ethnicity and minority groups dealt with the issues of assimilation and acculturation.[17] Of the present 24 articles appearing in the above journals since 1969, 10 deal with inter-ethnic group relations, 12 deal primarily with intra-ethnic group situations, and two do not emphasize either relation. It is interesting, in light of the large share of past empirical work in this area dealing with assimilation, that only four articles of the 24 clearly deal with the topic of assimilation though this may be implied from some others even though the topic of assimilation is not explicitly dealt with. It is important to note that over half the articles deal not with matters of race relations

or inter-ethnic tensions but rather deal specifically in issues designed to lead to greater understanding of intra-group mechanisms involved in matters of ethnicity.

The major reason for considering these articles here is that of pointing out the difficulties pervasive in this area resulting from lack of agreement among scholars as to definition of subject matter let alone the enormous problem of adequately measuring minority and ethnic phenomena. Things here have changed very little since Vilfredo Pareto remarked in 1923 that:

> The term "ethnic" is one of the vaguest known to sociology. We use it here merely to designate a state of fact, going in no sense into the question of explaining the fact.[18]

If the 24 articles examined here can be taken to reflect the thinking of scholars interested in this area since 1969, it is fairly clear that the term "ethnic" is preferred to the term "minority." In the titles of these articles, only five of the 24 examined utilized the term "minority" whereas 14 used "ethnic" and the remaining five used "ethnicity" to describe the investigation. Though it might be assumed that the term "minority" most often refers to Blacks, only two of the five articles employing this term used it to denote Blacks exclusively. It should be pointed out that many articles are to be found in this six-year period which deal with matters of ethnic or minority concern but did not utilize either of the terms in the title; in these cases the subjects of the investigation were denoted by specific racial, religious, or national origin labels such as Catholic, Greek American, Chinese and so on. Utilizing such operational terminology avoids, of course, the difficulties encountered in understanding the meaning of terms but at the same time creates some problem at the level of conceptual and general analysis of the phenomenon under investigation. For these reasons, articles not utilizing the terms of interest here by including them in the title were not involved in this brief analysis.

It is interesting to note that five of the articles used the terms "ethnic" and "minority" interchangeably and synonomously regardless of which term was employed in the title. Do these terms, or should these terms, mean the same thing? This is a question to be explored shortly. Though all articles should set forth operational definitions of the terms used, only six give any space whatever to defining at the conceptual level what ethnic or minority might mean in the particular article. This is important, of course, if comparisons are to be made between groups or generality in findings is of interest. At the operational level, however, it is clear that "national origin" is apparently what is meant by these researchers more often than either "religion" or "race." Seven articles operationally defined either ethnic or minority to mean national origin; six utilized either of the terms to mean national origin and race; four meant by either of the terms national origin and religion; two meant race exclusively (the term "minority" being used to describe this); and three of the articles meant national origin, race, and religion by the term "ethnic." The remaining two articles could not be classified in this three-fold scheme. In other words, at the moment the terms "ethnic" and "minority" apparently are used as umbrella terms to mean "national origin," "race," or "religion," or some combination of these across groups or within a single group. It is not possible to predict from the title of an article involving either of these two terms which types of groups will be studied in the paper. Is this an obstacle to the development of common understanding of matters ethnic? There are those, for example, Bernard R. Berelson, who define the term "ethnic" as specifically and only referring to national origins.[19] Those of this persuasion usually then consider three separate conceptual groups: racial, religious, and ethnic groups. Before this question is addressed, it might be helpful to explore some of the conceptual definitions which have been advanced for the terms "ethnic" and "minority." If these terms are to be utilized meaningfully it is clearly important to understand the history of these terms.

Max Weber believed that differences in the style of beard and hairdo, clothes, eating habits, and any other types of visible differences could give rise to repulsion and contempt for those who embodied them. On the positive side, however, these differences could give rise to a "consciousness of kind." This consciousness may become the basis for communal social relationships; all differences of custom can sustain a sense of honor and dignity in their bearers. The original motives for the differences may be forgotten and these are then perpetuated as conventions. Similarity of physical type and of custom has the very same effect on formation of a community, regardless of whether it is biologically inherited or culturally transmitted. Not every similarity and contrast gives rise to the communal life, but when this is backed up and enforced by a memory of an actual migration, either colonization or individual migration, the community-forming powers become greater than would otherwise be the case. In Weber's mind, the belief in tribal kinship can have important consequences for the formation of the political community. Therefore, he defines "ethnic groups" as:

> Those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent--because of similarities of physical type, of customs, or of both, or because of memories of colonization and migration--in such a way that this belief is important for the continuation of non-kinship communal relationship, we shall call "ethnic" groups, regardless of whether an objective blood relationship exists or not.[20]

In the attempt to generally describe the ethnic group, E.K. Francis has indicated, "If we adopt for the moment Ferdinand Toennies' typological dichotomy, Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, we would have to classify an ethnic group as a rather pure type of Gemeinschaft."[21] Recalling Toennies' work, a group of the association (Gesellschaft) type is based on a definite purpose; it is a means by which the individual attains his own ends. In a community (Gemeinschaft),

however, the individuals are treated and act as a unit of solidarity. Sanctions are concerned here with attitudes rather than with specific acts. Groups of the community type always live in relatively local segregation from other groups, whereas this barrier to social contact is absent in the association. The community aims at preservation of the group while the association aims at the preservation of the individual. While this appears fairly satisfactory at the general level, it would be desirable to have some general notion of the characteristics of the sub-type of community specifically in question. And there are,of course, any number of characteristics widely attributed to ethnic groups: common language, mores, attitudes, territory, descent, history, and government. This approach, that of delineation of characteristics in the specific, is a strained one at best since it is known that two or more distinct ethnic groups may share in common certain characteristics, such as language and religion. At the same time, not all ethnic groups are homogeneous with respect to, for example, religion or descent. Francis concludes, "we cannot define the ethnic group as a plurality pattern which is characterized by a distinct language, culture, territory, religion, and so on."[22] Nonetheless, certain propositions can be set forth about the ethnic group for the purposes of conceptual investigation.

The following four propositions (as advanced by Francis) may serve as initial guidelines in the consideration of problems in conceptual definition. (1) In the usual sense, words such as "race,""religious group," and "people" do not indicate any definite categories of sociological classification since these terms do not include characteristics which describe certain elements of homogeneity associated with distinct social groups. (2) The term "ethnic group" may be valuable to describe a sub-type of the community concept. This subtype can be distinguished from the sub-types of family, caste, or residential communities

inasmuch as the latter are unable to satisfy all the basic societal needs of human nature, whereas the ethnic group not only permits a high degree of self-reliance and segregation but also enforces and preserves it. It is fairly important to note here that the ethnic group does not appear to be as dependent on face-to-face communication as other types of communities. Under certain conditions, largely those present in many ethnic groups, the characteristics of the primary group may be extended to larger, less well-defined locally, and culturally less homogeneous groups. For example, the peasant village may be viewed as an ideal primary group; under certain conditions, it has been observed that the "we-feeling" (as defined by Simmel) of this community can be made to envelop the natives of an entire valley or even wider region. This larger, secondary group possesses many of the characteristics of the smaller group. In this manner, the ethnic group may be said to be the most inclusive, cumulative, and realistic type of secondary community (for empirical evidence of this phenomenon see Winch, Greer, and Blumberg, 1967).[23] (3) The principal factor which may bring about this enlarging of "we-feeling" is based on a mental process of abstraction of characteristics of the primary group to the secondary group. For example, the followers of a new religion may be moved by the value they attach to their faith to withdraw their we-feeling from the non-believing members of their original community and extend it to only believers. This is clearly a communication process. And (4) in the manner of Weber, all ethnic groups behave in the same typical way, regardless of whether the underlying ideologies hinge on religious, political, cultural, racial, or other characteristics and regardless of whether these are real or fictitious. In short, for Francis the ethnic group is a human collectivity based on an assumption of common origin, real or imaginary. The ethnic group was created only when the peasant commune broke up, and was essentially an attempt to keep some of the values, some of the informality, some of

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the support, some of the intimacy of the communal life in the midst of an impersonal, formalistic, rationalized, urban, and industrialized society.

Consistent with the conceptions of Weber and Francis, Milton Gordon sees the ethnic group as embodying an underlying commonality inherent in national origin, religion, and race. He uses "ethnic group" to refer to:

> ...a type of group contained within the national boundaries of America... which is defined or set off by race, religion, or national origin, or some combination of these categories. I do not mean to imply that these three concepts mean the same thing. They do not. Race, technically, refers to differential concentrations of gene frequencies responsible for traits which, so far as we know, are confined to physical manifestations such as skin color or hair form; it has no intrinsic connection with cultural patterns and institutions. Religion and national origins, while both cultural phenomena, are distinctly different institutions which do not necessarily vary concomitantly. However, all of these categories have a common social-psychological referent, in that all of them serve to create, through historical circumstances, a sense of <u>peoplehood</u> for groups within the United States, and this common referent of peoplehood is recognized in the American public's usage of these three terms, <u>frequently in interchangeable fashion</u> (underline my own).[24]

It can be noted that it is not only the American public which uses these terms interchangeably but also the academicians as shown in the previous analysis of articles on ethnicity and minorities.

Andrew Greeley, of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, takes "primal diversity" as his point of departure in the discussion of the conceptualization of ethnicity. He notes, as in the case of Weber and Francis, that Clifford Geertz has also been troubled by the diverse factors apparently underlying ethnicity. On this matter, Geertz says:

> When we speak of "communalism" in India we refer to religious contrasts; when we speak of it in Malaya we are mainly concerned with racial ones, and in the Congo with tribal ones. But the grouping under a common heading is not simply adventitious; the phenomena referred to are in some way similar.[25]

Geertz calls this common factor one of "primordial attachment." Greeley adopts this concept of primordial tie, a "longing not to belong to any other group," as Geertz puts the matter, as essential to what is broadly defined as "ethnic"

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behavior. The poetic sense of this concept can be seen in Geertz' discussion of the term:

> By a primordial attachment is meant one that stems from the "givens"--or more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the "assumed" givens--of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond them, the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of language, and following particular social patterns. These congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on, are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbors, one's fellow believer, ipso facto, as a result not merely of one's personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by the virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself. The general strength of such primordial bonds, and the types of them that are important differ from person to person, from society to society, and from time to time. But for virtually every person, in every society, at almost all times, some attachments seem to flow more from a sense of natural--some would say spiritual--affinity than from social interaction.[26]

This concept is essentially a more "poetic" statement of what Gordon means by "peoplehood." These are obviously mental states which accompany, under certain conditions, the objective states of national origin, religion, race, and so on as discussed by Weber, Francis and Gordon.

Finally, if the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences can be taken to project some common understandings of social scientists interested in this problem, it may be worthwhile to note the viewpoint set forth there by Caroline Ware:

> Ethnic communities are groups bound together by common ties of race, nationality, or culture, living together within an alien civilization but remaining culturally distinct. They may occupy a position of self-sufficient isolation or they may have extensive dealings with the surrounding population while retaining a separate identity. In its strict meaning the word ethnic denotes race; but when applied to communities in the above sense it is loosely used, in the absence of any other comprehensive term to cover the more general concept of culture.[27]

To such a conception, perhaps Weber, Francis, Geertz, Greeley, and Gordon would add that such "common ties" are, in general, of a primordial nature.

The terms "ethnicity," "ethnic group," and "minority group" have been used almost interchangeably in this paper to this point. There are some differences,

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perhaps some very important differences, between these terms. Ethnicity, a relatively new term, derives its meaning (in the literal sense) from the Greek word, ethnos, meaning tribe, race, or nation, though more recently it has been often associated with another Greek term, ethos, meaning customs or patterns, because of its emphasis on social characteristics of groups rather than on their biological origins implied by the first term.[28] It is also interesting to note the relationship the term ethos has to communication. Aristotle used the term to describe one of his three methods of rhetoric: logos; pathos; and ethos. While logos referred to the logical reasoning method and pathos to the use of emotional methods, ethos involved the personal moral character of the rhetoritician. Today, those interested in the study of source credibility utilize the term ethos in much the same manner as did Aristotle; it is used to refer to the personal believability of the speaker. Factor analytical studies in this area of source credibility have shown two main factors underlying persuasability of the speaker: authoritative knowledge possessed by the speaker and the moral character of the speaker. It will be recalled that those interested in the study of ethnicity have often placed emphasis upon the moral in relation to the community concept. The word "communication" derives from the Latin communis for "common." The terms "communication," "community," "communion," and "ethnicity" are very much related. Ethnicity can perhaps be viewed as encompassing the communion meanings of "communication" and the moral meanings of "ethos." Those interested in the study of communication processes no doubt have a closer relationship to those interested in the study of ethnic phenomena than is superficially evident.

Richard Kolm of the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs has given some "concreteness" to the terms in the following manner:

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> The term "ethnicity" refers to basic cultural patterns developed in the formative stages of historical social groups and preserved as modified in their later experiences. Ethnicity is essentially concerned with the relational aspects of group life, or the social bond in human groups, as it developed out of primordial ties along with patterns of communication and cooperation and, above all, as it expresses itself in the concern of the group for survival through successful socialization of the young.[29]

The term "ethnic group" refers to cultural subsystems of larger societies. It is being used increasingly as an overall term for cultural, racial, religious, national, linguistic or even purely social groups. Greeley has summarized six characteristics which can be considered as necessary and sufficient conditions for the existence of an ethnic group:

(1) A presumed consciousness of kind rooted in a sense of common origin.

(2) Sufficient territorial concentration to make it possible for members of the group to interact with each other most of the time and to reduce to a minimum interaction with members of other ethnic groups.

(3) A sharing of ideals and values by members of the ethnic group.

(4) Strong moralistic fervor for such ideals and values, combined with a sense of being persecuted by those who do not share them and hence are not members of the ethnic group.

(5) Distrust of those who are outside the ethnic group, combined with massive ignorance of them.

(6) Finally, a strong tendency in members of an ethnic group to view themselves and their circle as the whole of reality, or at least the whole of reality that matters.[30]

The above characteristics should be viewed as "ideal-typical" constructions and, in their pure type, may not exist in all or any ethnic groups to the extent indicated here. Under the above prescription, it is no doubt a fact that intellectuals and WASPS, among others, could be viewed as ethnic groups; when the term "primordial bond or tie" is attached to the first statement (that of common origins), these groups probably would be excluded. Thus, not all social groups possess ethnicity but all groups possessing ethnicity, by definition--and perhaps in the reality of such situations--are social groups in the sense of general

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common ties. The common ties of ethnicity are peculiar to ethnic groups. They are primordial common ties.

The history of intellectual discussion of ethnicity is considerably more extended than that surrounding "minority group." It was perhaps Louis Wirth, in 1945, who first defined the concept "minority group":

> We may define a minority as a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. The existence of a minority in a society implies the existence of a corresponding dominant group enjoying higher social status and greater privileges. Minority status carries with it the exclusion from full participation in the life of the society. Though not necessarily an alien group the minority is treated and regards itself as a people apart.[31]

Though Wirth warned against it ("Nor should it be assumed that the concept is a statistical one."), researchers utilizing the term sometimes define a minority in numerical terms. For example, in a recent article Robert E.Kennedy,Jr. indicates, "A minority group is defined simply as any distinct group comprising less than 50 percent of a total population."[32] This has been the subject of debate as indicated when William Peterson was compelled to point out in 1964 that the sociological concept of "minority group" is more than a simple aggregate of persons who happen to share the same characteristic. It is a coherent subculture whose members interact with one another and distinguish themselves from the rest of the population.[33] Most who utilize the term no doubt adopt the latter meaning even though, operationally as in the case of Kennedy, the numerical mode is used in practice.

Do the terms "ethnic group" and "minority group" have the same meaning? If this is so, why is it necessary to have two terms signify the same concept? There are differences between the two terms which might be considered by those wishing

to study this area from both the macro and micro points of view. First, it should be noted that there is a more "rich" history attached to the academic discussion of the term "ethnic" as opposed to "minority." This discussion ranges widely from Weber to Geertz to Greeley. The term "ethnic" has been the preferred term in empirical work in the past six years in nine of the more popular sociological and communication research journals. The term "ethnic" is not subject to "dictionary meaning" distortion in numerical terms as in the case of the term "minority." These are perhaps "trivial" differences; the most important difference is a subtle one but one which can have important ramifications for the nature of future empirical endeavor. Wirth indicates that the existence of a minority seems to imply the existence of a majority group which enjoys higher privileges and higher status; that is, there is the implication that the "majority always wins." There are certain political emphases in the concept of minority-majority groups more so than in the concept of "ethnic group." The use of the term minority implies distaste, as defined by Wirth, on the part of the larger society for the smaller society. The emphasis is on discrimination and the unfortunate status of the minority group. When this term is utilized, often the object of investigation will be inter-group comparisons or inter-group tensions. At any rate, the emphasis in the classic definition of the term "minority" is upon the negative aspects attached to those in the minority position. On the other hand, the term "ethnic" as currently used and as historically defined from the time of Weber appears to put the emphasis on the positive, communal characteristics of the phenomena involved. The emphasis in the past few years by those who utilize this term has been not so much on inter-group comparisons but on understanding intra-ethnic group mechanisms which seem to provide the basis for a strong secondary community as derived from the primary group. The definitional properties of ethnicity seem to imply that the task facing the investigator is

one of exploring the underlying phenomenon common to the racial, national origin, and religious elements of ethnicity. This should be of primary importance to those interested in the study of communication processes since it is accepted by many that the outstanding underlying characteristic of the ethnic group is its ability to extend the "we-feeling" of the primary group, notably the family unit, to the larger community. This is undoubtedly a communication process that is yet to be understood. Given the nature of social cohesion in contemporary society in general, it is possible that some understanding of intra-ethnic group processes might shed light upon the "community problem" in the society as a whole.

In light of the above conception of ethnicity, it may be worthwhile to examine some of the implications of such a notion for the problems frequently evident in the empirical work in this area. Since one of the major motivations for clarification of terms is that of providing some order to work in the area, especially empirical inquiry, it should be possible to show directly the impact such a consideration of the basic phenomena would have on subsequent study.

Ethnicity and Communication: Some Operational Problems

It has been suggested that one way of coming to some understanding of the meaning of community is through study of the ethnic group. The outstanding aspect of the ethnic group lies in its ability to extend the "we-feeling" of the primary group to the secondary group. The basic primary group of interest from this point of view is the ethnic family. It has been suggested elsewhere by the author that the continuity of community may be understood through examination of transmission processes of ethnicity.[34] These transmission processes may be most readily observed in the transmission of ethnic values across generations, that is, from parent to child. This is clearly to be recognized as a communication process and, therefore, should be of great interest to those wishing to under-

stand the nature of communication. Though there are many forms the study of ethnicity and communication might take, for example, the application of Chaffee and McLeod's Constraint Analysis to family communication patterns,[35] it is likely most empirical work will share the same problem. Ethnicity will need to be measured and is measured in one way or another in all studies dealing with this issue. Most often this measurement will deal with the extent of ethnic identification of the subjects. This raises the other major question in such study; who will serve as subjects for the investigation? It may be worthwhile to examine some of the operational problems encountered in the measurement of ethnic identification specifically as these may relate to the conceptual definitions of the area explored earlier. This examination may provide an answer to the second question regarding selection of subjects.

It will be recalled that Pareto in 1923 stated that the term "ethnic" is one of the vaguest known to sociology and that it could only be designated as a fact and not really explained (see page 6 of the present paper). Though the empirical machinery has vastly improved since the time of this statement, the author has recently conducted a study which points toward the essential validity of Pareto's statement.[36] Subjects were selected in this study,[37] as in most studies of this kind known to the author, based upon the predetermination that they were indeed Jewish; that is, it was accepted as fact that these subjects were indeed "ethnic." Then the subjects proceed to "tell" the investigator "how ethnic" they are through use of stereotypical conceptions of what they should do or think to be ethnic for the particular group. The process is very much like saying that if a person has a last name which appears to be of Greek derivation then that person must be a Greek American and therefore ethnic. In today's complex society this procedure is clearly inadequate. One is reminded of the

problem in contemporary Israel where there is some difficulty in determining who is Jewish and who is not Jewish so as to facilitate operation of the government under the Israeli constitution. It is important not only how the individual is identified by others but also how the individual identifies himself. As Harry Stack Sullivan has indicated, human beings interact not so much in terms of what they actually are but in terms of the conceptions that they form of themselves and of one another.[38] Self-identification with a group would appear to present a satisfactory alternative to stereotypical classification by the investigator. A possible procedure might be that of dealing with the basic agreed-upon elements of ethnicity: race, religion, and national origin. One or more of these may be salient for an individual or none of them may be important; the subjects should indicate their relative importance to the investigator as a starting point. Subsequently, respondents could place themselves on continuua representing each of these three dimensions in two ways: (1) their perception of how an "ideal type" placed at the exact point on the three elements of ethnicity the subject placed himself would be characterized in terms of attitude, beliefs, and behavior; and (2) how the subject characterizes his own attitude, beliefs, and behavior. Q-type factor analysis or cluster analysis could be employed to define ethnic groups based upon such responses. In this manner, the subjects define their own ethnic group and avoid the problem of the investigator accepting as "fact" the existence of a particular conception of ethnic group which may not exist at all. There are undoubtedly a myriad of other methodologies which might accomplish the same end. If Oscar Handlin is correct in his belief that American history is synonomous with ethnic history, then students of this area may be advised to study this element of group life in the general population.

Concluding Comments

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> I don't feel very strongly about being Greek. My father's father came to America from Greece; he married my mother who is Portuguese. I don't know how to cook Greek food--we never had it much at home. I don't speak or read the Greek language nor do I attend the Orthodox Church. There just wasn't much emphasis on these things at home. My father never harped on all these Greek things. He wanted us to be Americans. Maybe it's because his father always pushed so much Greek stuff on him.
>
> I don't necessarily want to marry a Greek man; I just don't care too much about that. Hardly any of my friends in school and growing up were Greek; many were Jews. There were many Jews in my neighborhood. It's more important to think about people.
>
> But when I do get married I want it to take place in the Greek Orthodox Church; that's very important to me.

This description of feelings about "being Greek" as revealed by a young collegian from Atlanta indicates the tremendous complexity inherent in understanding the problem of ethnic identification in contemporary America. On the one hand, this young lady appears to know little about her heritage or to care a great deal about these matters; on the other hand, she says it is terribly important she be married in the Greek Orthodox Church even though neither her father nor her mother attend the Church. The resurgence of the concern about matters ethnic as contained in the "new pluralism" on the part of the young in America demands a fresh approach on the part of those interested in understanding the contemporary social map.

A prerequisite to fresh understanding must necessarily be the development of more meaningful conceptions of the basic nature of the subject matter being studied. Consideration must first be given to what is meant by the terms "ethnic" and "minority" in order to avoid outmoded acceptance of ethnic "fact" as suggested by Pareto so long ago. The relative importance of studying inter-ethnic as opposed

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to intra-ethnic phenomena should be explored in light of general group life status in the United States at the moment. For this and other purposes, a consideration of basic definitional and conceptual matters will have far-reaching consequences.

The "theory" of ethnicity has been roughly clear for some time. The perception of "consciousness of kind," as pointed out by Weber, is central to the development of sympathetic identification with others in the same category. The assumption is that the inner experiences and emotional reactions of people like oneself would be similar to one's own reactions. Those who develop consciousness of kind also become convinced that outsiders are basically different from themselves. In addition, for a person who identifies with an ethnic category, its history provides a backdrop before which to review his own conduct. The present view of this history may sometimes be fictitious, as pointed out by Thomas and Znaniecki in their historic study. And presumably, for the person who identifies, the others in this group become the most important source of reference other orientation. The time when this "theory" of consciousness of kind presented dangers to the larger societal integrative functions has no doubt passed. The time may now have come when it is important to concentrate study on the community forming powers of ethnicity.

It is hoped that future study by communicologists in the area of ethnicity will give consideration to the two very basic viewpoints set forth in this paper. (1) The term "ethnicity" is a preferable term to describe phenomena often discussed under various categories such as minority, religion, race, nationality, and other specific cultural labels. And (2) it is now time to study ethnicity from the point-of-view of intra-group mechanisms of communication which provide for continuity of community and the extension of primary group characteristics to the

secondary group. It is not suggested that inter-ethnic group study be abandoned, but rather that investigators should aim for balance in the emphasis placed upon intra- and inter-group studies in ethnicity.

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